



EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

Application number : **93500179.2**

Int. Cl.⁵ : **G07F 17/34**

Date of filing : **30.12.93**

Priority : **31.12.92 ES 9302004**

Date of publication of application :
10.08.94 Bulletin 94/32

Designated Contracting States :
**AT BE CH DE DK FR GB GR IE IT LI LU MC NL
PT SE**

Applicant : **SEGA, S.A.**
Carretera de Toledo, km.22,900
E-28980 Parla (Madrid) (ES)

Inventor : **Morales Hermo, Eduardo**
Carretera de Toledo, km 22,900
E-28980 Parla (Madrid) (ES)

Representative : **Carpintero Lopez, Francisco**
HERRERO & ASOCIADOS, S.L.
Alcalá, 21
E-28014 Madrid (ES)

Combination device for games machines with cash prizes.

The combination device is based on the provision of an auxiliary and multiple viewer (6) in which three figures (2') can appear, the centre figure being marked in the frame (8) and being able to be transferred to any of the main viewers (1) in the machine, and in particular to line (4) that is where the possible prize is established, in order for the centre figure (2') appearing in one of the boxes of the auxiliary and multiple viewer (6) moreover to allow, on being transferred to any of the viewers (1), the combination obtained in the winning line (4) to be modified and thereby stand a chance or a greater chance of winning a prize. The change of the figures (2') in the auxiliary viewer (6) to the main viewers (1) is effected using respective push-buttons (10).

EP 0 609 637 A1

SPECIFICATION

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a combination device that has been especially designed for games machines, in particular games machines capable of supplying cash prizes, and namely machines in which a number of symbols or figures are used to obtain several combinations, that may be rewarded with a prize.

The device of the invention is designed for the player to have a greater involvement in the development of the game.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The aforesaid type of machines are fitted with a number of viewers, generally three or four, through which pictures, symbols or figures, as aforesaid, can appear in sequence and in cycles, simulating rotary drums that turn with each move, at the end of which and once they have come to a stop, the drums show a given combination of what is generally known as the "winning line", that may receive a prize.

These simulated drums are started after inserting the relevant coin, on pressing a button, this being the only involvement of the player, who then holds a passive stand awaiting the results offered by the machine.

In an attempt at having the machine be more attractive to the player, in particular by affording a more active involvement of the player in the development of the game, many solutions are known which in one way or another the machine is provided with a "joker", that is generally a viewer as the aforesaid viewers, in which at the end of each move a given symbol or figure appears, that can under certain circumstances be transferred to the winning line, to replace one of the existing symbols therein and modify the combination when such is not rewarded, and obviously in order for there to be a bigger chance of winning a prize.

It is also known that this operation can be repeated twice or more, depending on the options the machine offers the player at each time, so that when the options are several the player may transfer the figure of the first option or not, whereupon the complementary drum will "turn" at random or pursuant to a programme to offer a new figure, that may likewise be transferred or not to any of the viewers on the winning line, and so on until a prize is won or the machine offered options are all used up.

The player, however, because the various options are uncontrollable, viz. the symbols appearing therein are totally beyond his control, can think and not without reason that in most cases the machine will be offering options or figures with which the player cannot achieve a winning combination, obeying an operating programme with which the options will ap-

parently be many but the results scarcely satisfactory.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The combination device for games machines subject of the invention, based on the same idea of offering the player an enhanced chance of winning a prize, has been designed and structured in order to solve the aforesaid problem, so that the player can be directly involved in making the best of the above-mentioned options having a greater involvement in the results obtained.

More specifically and in order to achieve the above, the characteristics of the device of the invention, taking the classic viewers or simulated drums with which the said "winning line" is obtained, are concentrated on the fact that the source generating complementary options has a further three or more viewers, of which only one, in particular the centre viewer, will be able to have its contents transferred to any one viewer on the winning line, though these auxiliary viewers will be interrelated so that they will altogether define a single drum, capable of "turning" to the right or to the left, so that if such drum turns to the right the figure in the centre viewer will move to the viewer on the right, the figure on the latter shall disappear, the figure in the left viewer shall move to the centre viewer and a new figure shall appear in the left viewer, maintaining a given unchangeable sequence and the said auxiliary viewers working with two end push-buttons that allow unit displacement of the symbols or figures in either direction, viz. "turning" of the drum constituted by the three viewers in either direction, prior to displacement of the figure in the centre viewer to the winning line, this simulated and complementary drum being able to make as many unit advancements in either direction as there are options offered by the machine to the player in each specific move.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In order to provide a fuller description and contribute to the complete understanding of the characteristics of this invention, a set of drawings is attached to the specification which, while purely illustrative and not fully comprehensive, shows the following:

The only figure shows a front elevation view of the screen of a game machines with cash prizes, namely the sector with the combination device constituting the object of this invention.

PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

The figure shows that the combination device subject hereof is applicable to games machines in which three or more viewers (1) are established, through which a number of pictures, symbols or fig-

ures (2) can appear in cycles and in sequence, as if they were respective rotary drums, which viewers comprise, in the practical embodiment shown in the figure and chosen as the preferred embodiment, windows (1) through which endless strips (3) can be seen, lying on a set of inner rollers, not shown in the figure, one of which is suitably motorised, so that each window (1) not only shows the graphics (2) making up the combination or winning line (4), appropriately marked by the side arrows (5), but the figures lying just before and after the same, in order thereby to achieve a greater realism for these simulated drums.

Now then, complementing this conventional structure, the combination device subject hereof is fitted with three complementary viewers, though this number can be greater without this affecting the essence of the invention at all, and that in accordance with the selected practical embodiment altogether comprise a single horizontally elongate window (6) through which another endless strip (7) can be seen, similar to the aforesaid strip (3) but peculiar in that the window (6) only shows three figures (2') of which only the figure in the centre position and that is duly marked with the frame (8) can be transferred to any of the viewers (1), in particular to the winning line (4) thereon, in order to modify the combination of such winning line, and in accordance with the arrows (9) shown in the figure, using respective push-buttons (10).

This auxiliary and multiple viewer (6) works with two end push-buttons (11-11') that under certain circumstances allow this simulated drum to be moved manually and step by step, as explained below.

With this structure, and as is conventional, when the player inserts the relevant coin in the machine and pushes the starting button, the simulated drums (3) turn to show in sequence and through the windows (1) the graphics (2) established thereon, and at the end of each move the winning line (4) has a given combination that can be rewarded with a prize.

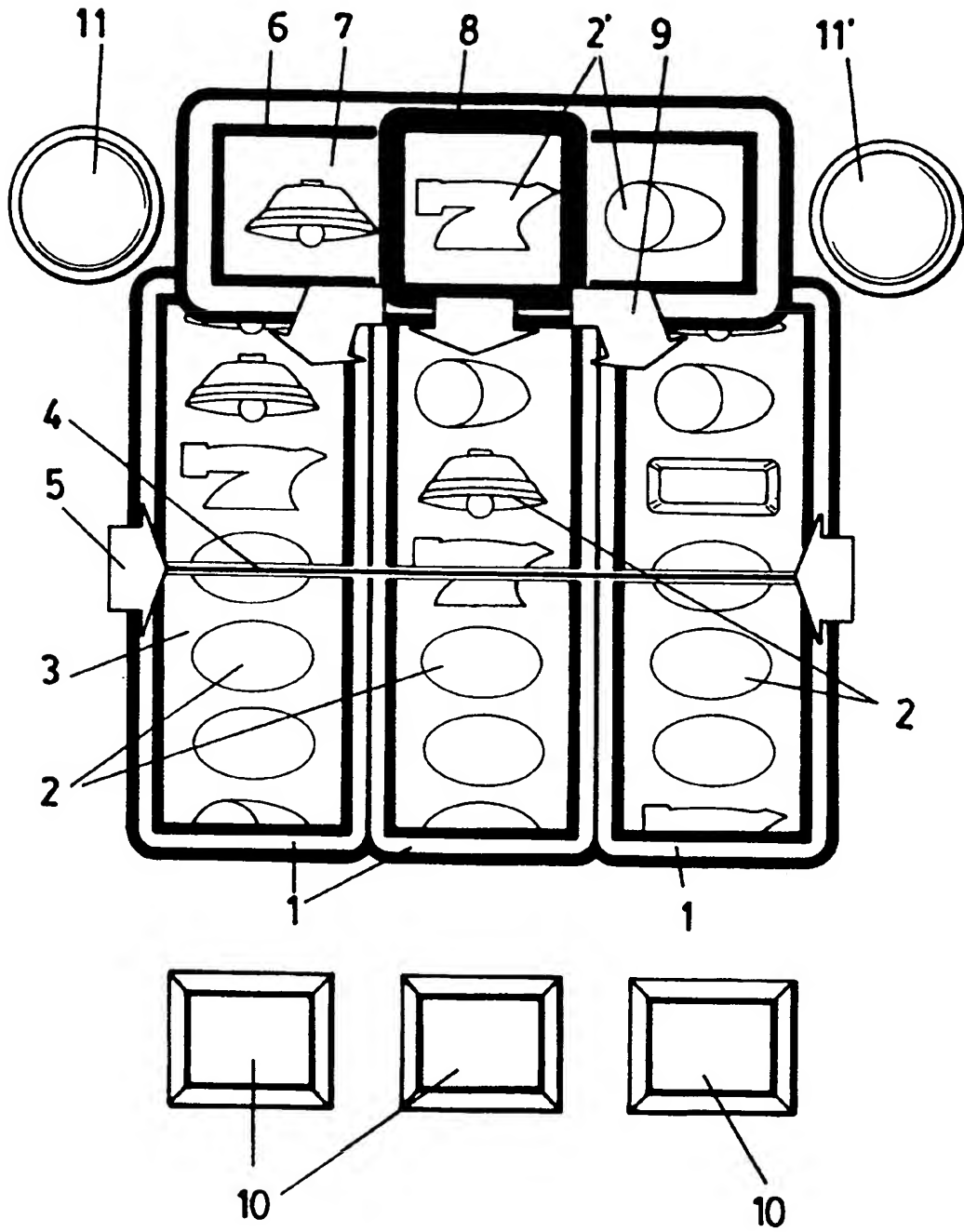
If this combination has no prize, under given circumstances the machine allows the player to substitute any of the figures in the said winning line (4), using the push-buttons (10), in particular to replace the same with the figure 2' shown within the centre frame (8) of the auxiliary multiple viewer, wherein the relevant drum (7) shall have turned at random, or apparently at random. Furthermore, the machine may offer the player one or several change options, so that if the option is one only, only one of the buttons (10) may be pushed to transfer the centre figure (2') to the place the player shall have selected, but if the options the machine offers are several, the player may use such options to change such centre figure (2') causing the complementary drum (7) to "turn" to the right or to the left, pushing the respective buttons (11-11') as many times as the number of machine offered options shall allow until the centre frame (8) has the

most appropriate figure to be transferred to the main line or winning line (4).

5 Claims

1.- A combination device for games machines with cash prizes, in particular for games machines of the kind having three or more viewers (1) configuring respective real or simulated drums, through which a number of symbols or figures (2) can be seen in cycles and in sequence that shall at the end of each move determine a combination (4) that can be rewarded with a prize, characterised in that it is also fitted with a number of complementary viewers (6), the number being at least three, that are duly associated to the main viewers (1) in the machine and in turn show symbols or figures (2') that can under certain circumstances change position within this set of complementary viewers (6) to which end the same work with two end push-buttons (11-11') that allow the figures (2') to move to the right or to the left, before the centre figure is finally moved to any of the main viewers (1), all in order that such complementary viewers (6) configure as a whole a single simulated drum where a given order of the figures is maintained at all times on the imaginary periphery of the drum.

2.- A combination device for games machines with cash prizes, as in claim 1, characterised in that the viewers making up the said complementary and simulated drum can be altogether replaced by a single endless strip (7) carrying the said row of figures (2') and duly assembled on rollers guiding the same, one of which will be appropriately motorised and controlled.





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 93 50 0179

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.5)
Y	GB-A-2 100 492 (QUESTENCO LIMITED) * page 2, line 33 - line 57; figure 2 * * page 1, line 7 - line 12 * ---	1,2	G07F17/34
Y	GB-A-2 042 782 (JPM (AUTOMATIC MACHINES)) * abstract; figure 1 * ---	1,2	
A	GB-A-2 243 935 (S.A. SEGA) * abstract; figure * ---	1,2	
A	EP-A-0 060 019 (BARCREST) * page 5, line 35 - page 6, line 19; figures 2,3 * -----	1,2	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.5)
			G07F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 26 May 1994	Examiner Neville, D
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application I : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

EPO FORM 503 (03.92) (P/NCN)